

CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

BDAC Watershed Work Group

Meeting Summary

The first Bay-Delta Advisory Council (BDAC) Watershed Work Group Meeting was held on August 19, 1998, in Chico, CA. The BDAC Watershed Work Group (Work Group) was created by the public's request to have more participation in the CALFED Watershed Program (Watershed Program). The Work Group represents a broad geographic area and wide array of interests. Attendees of the Work Group meetings have direct interaction with the Watershed Program's Interagency Advisory Watershed Team (IWAT) and an opportunity to review and comment on draft documents of the Watershed Program. In addition, the Work Group will provide advise to the BDAC on issues related to the Watershed Program.

Enclosed is a summary of the meeting, which has been organized under general topics, rather than according to the order in which comments where made during the meeting.

Introductions

The co-chairs of the Work Group, Martha Davis (BDAC/Sierra Nevada Alliance) and Robert Meacher (BDAC/Regional Council for Rural Counties) began the meeting with introductions. A list of meeting participants is included (Attachment A). The following meeting materials were distributed: Agenda; *Program Goals and Objectives (draft)*; *Developing a Draft Preferred Program Alternative (draft)*; and *Draft Preferred Program Alternative - 30 Year Policy Framework*.

Overview/Update of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program

Steve Ritchie (CALFED) presented an overview and update of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program (CALFED Program). The CALFED Program is comprised of 15 federal and state agencies who, along with Bay-Delta stakeholders, collaboratively seek to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta. The CALFED Program includes six common program elements: Ecosystem Restoration; Water Quality; Water Use Efficiency; Levee System Integrity; Water Transfers; and the recently developed Watershed Program. Various work groups have been established to assist the common programs in the development of their elements. The work groups allow for a variety of interests to come together to find a balance and develop solutions.

The entire CALFED Program is actually a "watershed program" of sorts. Many watershed activities will take place and fall under the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP), the Water Quality Program (WQP), and of course, the Watershed Program. However, watershed activities in the upper watersheds (e.g., above the dams) and in the Bay Area are not covered by the ERP or the WQP, but only in the Watershed Program.

Management Strategy (Strategy) and the Goals and Objectives document. It was explained that the Strategy was intended to lay out a broad framework of the Watershed Program. The Goals and Objectives complements the framework by describing in detail what the intentions of the Watershed Program are. Over the next two months, with the help of the Work Group, the Strategy will be further refined and converted into the Watershed Program Plan, which will be a technical appendix to the Draft PEIS/EIR in December 1999.

- A question was raised regarding certification of watershed groups by CALFED. Judy Heath explained that the Watershed Program has no intentions of certifying or replacing existing watershed groups. The intent is to help coordinate watershed efforts through collaboration and integration.
- A concern was raised as to the timeline established for the Watershed Program. It was stated that because the Watershed Program is a very valuable and important element to the CALFED Program, it should not be pressured to produce an entire program plan in such a short amount of time. Steve Ritchie explained that although the Watershed Program element is fairly new, the overall CALFED Program has progressed for some time. Although the CALFED Program must move forward, it is important to note that all decisions made will be programmatic in nature and allow for adaptive management.
- It was asked by a meeting participant if CALFED was aware of all of the watershed activities that currently exist. Judy Heath replied that the Watershed Program is attempting to outreach to all watershed groups within the CALFED geographic area. In addition, coordination with a watershed clearinghouse is an objective of the Watershed Program. This collaboration will further enable CALFED to learn of other existing watershed activities.
- A question was raised regarding how CALFED will quantify additional yield of water downstream and timing functions. A reply by the IWAT stated that CALFED will not attempt to quantify these benefits, only recognize that they are indeed a benefit to the Bay-Delta system.
- A comment was noted regarding the lack of interfacing of local communities with the Watershed Program. There needs to be stronger connection between the two, especially regarding growth, rural/urban interactions, and land use. The IWAT agreed with the statement and noted that they are working towards bridging this gap. For instance, Russ Henly (IWAT) is working with the American River Watershed Group with growth concerns.
- It was noted that desalination programs have not been addressed by CALFED. The Work Group co-chairs responded that the Work Group meeting was not the right forum to address this issue. It was suggested that the comment be raised before the BDAC.
- A comment was made that additional storage of water should be a goal of the CALFED Program. Steve Ritchie replied that although water storage is not a CALFED goal, per se,

both groundwater and surface water storage, coupled with water management measures, will be used as a tool to reach the goals and objectives of the CALFED Program.

- A discussion was raised with the comment that CALFED should define what constitutes a "watershed group." It was pointed out that many watershed groups may be formed in the future with the hopes of receiving CALFED funding for various projects. It was felt by some participants that there may be lack of credibility and scrutiny with some groups and CALFED should clearly state what comprises a watershed group. On the other hand, it was refuted that if a watershed group meets the goals and objectives set forth by the Watershed Program, they should be able to participate. Furthermore, CALFED should not limit the development of creative ideas by anyone, but instead establish a criteria for participation in the Watershed Program. In addition, it was recommended that the Watershed Program could be inclusive, yet have some screening, by using a framework similar to the Proposition 204 proposals which integrates watershed activities with that of county government. It was further suggested that a maximum amount of money be allotted for overhead of watershed groups so that the majority of the monies go to watershed projects "on the ground".

In addition to the above mentioned comments, the following topics were raised and briefly discussed. However, it was decided that these issues warrant additional discussion at future Work Group meetings:

- Eligibility for funding through the Watershed Program;
- Use of models to establish prioritization/Development of models by local watershed groups;
- Issue of liability/Regulatory processes
- Identification of watersheds for inclusion into the Watershed Program;
- Formation of Partnerships (Objective III-B); and
- Long-term funding for monitoring/Relationship of CMARP with common programs.

Goals and Objectives

Goals

The Goal of the Watershed Program was read and opened for discussion.

It was suggested that the goal include an assurance to the public that watershed groups will not be harmed by the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. Other meeting participants felt that this concern should not be a *goal* of the Watershed Program and stated that topic is largely covered under Objective VI.

Another suggestion was to clarify that the Watershed Program is based solely on volunteer efforts. However, Judy Heath stated that CALFED may take a passive role and solicit watershed activities in areas where efforts are needed, but are not developed due to lack of coordination. In these instances, CALFED may assist local communities in developing watershed activities. Because of this possibility it was decided not to change the language.

Objectives

The Work Group reviewed the draft objectives of the Watershed Program. The Work Group relayed both general and specific comments to the objectives. The following are general comments; specific comments are illustrated on a "redlined-strike out" version of the document (Attachment B) for easier viewing.

- Government agencies should be revised throughout the document or footnoted to clearly indicate federal, state, and local, as well as special districts. Furthermore, agencies should be replaced with entities.
- Landowners should be included in any watershed groups that are formed.

JUDY - I AM WORKING ON THIS SECTION RIGHT NOW. I WILL NEED AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. PLEASE E-MAIL TO ME AT: maryk@jsanet.com. THANKS!

Future Meetings

The following date for the next Work Group meeting was agreed upon. Please note that a meeting location has also been decided upon:

**BDAC Watershed Work Group Meeting
September 2, 1998
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Department of Fish and Game/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Main Conference Room
4001 North Wilson Way
Stockton, CA**

The following dates for the upcoming BDAC Watershed Public Workshops were agreed upon. Please note that meeting locations have also been decided upon:

**BDAC Watershed Public Workshop
September 9, 1998
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
University of California Cooperative Extension
Auditorium
420 South Wilson Way
Stockton, CA**

and

BDAC Watershed Public Workshop
September 15, 1998
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Shasta College
800 Building (Social Sciences) - Room 806
11555 Old Oregon Trail
Redding, CA

Richardson, Bill
Ritchie, Steve
Saracino, Anthony
Sime, Fraser
Spurlock, Hank
Stewart, Frank
Trott, Chris
Tupper, Julie
Vieg, Brendan
Volke, Russ
Ward, Paul
Wills, Leah
Winstrip, George
Wolan, Otis

University of California Cooperative Extension
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Consultant
Department of Water Resources - Red Bluff

California Biomass Energy Alliance
U.S. Forest Service
Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy
U.S. Forest Service
California Department of Fish and Game
Plumas Corporation
Senator K. Maurice Johannessen
Plumas County Water Agency